

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000668

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/EX STEVE NOLAN, AF/EX GINNY MILHOUS, OBO  
DIRECTOR/CEO GENERAL CHARLES WILLIAMS AND OBO/REPM/AQD  
VICKI HARTUNG  
STATE ALSO FOR AF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ABLD](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI'S FOREIGN MINISTER RAISES NEC WITH  
AMBASSADOR

REF: A. STATE 119772

[1](#)B. DJIBOUTI 608

Classified By: Ambassador Marguerita D. Ragsdale.  
Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (U) Djibouti's Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssouf contacted Ambassador on July 10 to request an urgent meeting on the New Embassy Compound (NEC) Project. The meeting took place at the Foreign Ministry on July 11.

[1](#)2. (C) The Minister, joined by Director of Bilateral Relations Mohamed Ali Hassan, raised with the Ambassador Embassy's June 29, 2005 dipnote, which conveyed text of OBO requirements listed in Ref (A). He indicated he had just come from President Guelleh's office where he had reviewed the note with the President. Youssouf went through the list, and stated that there were no difficulties with the majority of the items requested. However, with respect to Vehicular Access, President Guelleh is concerned that the necessary security zone set up to protect his nearby residence might create the opportunity for an unfortunate incident at checkpoints where Djiboutian guards are armed. As such, a more northerly route for access to the NEC site was not feasible. Youssouf continued that if this denial of access is problematic for the U.S. in terms of its purchase of the particular piece of land it has chosen, the Government of Djibouti would be pleased to offer an alternative parcel in Haramous abutting the French cemetery and a few meters away from CERD Headquarters, or another site in Haramous. With respect to the U.S. requirement of a Water Well, the Minister said the MFA would have to attain Ministry of Agriculture concurrence. The Water Well is a new request of the U.S., the Minister said, and he indicated his fear that there will be no end to such requests regarding this piece of property.

[1](#)3. (C) Ambassador reassured the Minister that the June 29 dipnote contained the definitive list of requirements needed before payment could be made to the Government of Djibouti for the existing Haramous parcel. The Minister replied that he would get an answer on the matter of the well and put together a response that he would then send to the Embassy. Ambassador suggested that the Minister take the June 29 dipnote and address each issue in turn, using the exact language of our note in his reply. For example, she said, on the first item "Zoning", since the Government of Djibouti has no problem with this request, it should respond that the "Government of Djibouti approves and confirms that the United States of America is legally and lawfully entitled to construct its new embassy compound, including a warehouse and utility building, on the site located in Haramous, currently zoned residential." In this way, the Ambassador stated, the language would be certain to address specific needs of Washington that Djibouti's prior communication had not. For "Vehicular Access," the Government of Djibouti should state its position, but also state the alternative it is proposing. Again, the Ambassador urged that the language of Embassy's diplomatic note be incorporated into the Djiboutian response. The Foreign Minister agreed and promised to forward a diplomatic note the following day to the Embassy.

[1](#)4. (U) On July 12, Embassy received the following diplomatic note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Embassy translation), also reported septel:

Begin Text:

Republic of Djibouti  
Unity-Equality-Peace

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

No. 584/04/FAX/MAECI  
Djibouti 12 July 2005

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America in Djibouti and, referring to its diplomatic note No. 74 dated 29 June 2005, has the honor to inform the following:

#### Zoning:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti approves and confirms that the Government of the United States of America possesses a legal authorization to construct a new Embassy, a warehouse and utility building on the site in Haramous, currently zoned residential.

#### Haramous Development Plan:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti assures that the final development plan for the Haramous area will not substantially differ from the plan presented to the Government of the United States when the Conditional Purchase Agreement was signed.

#### Maximum Building Areas Under Roof:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti approves the request of 10,000 square meters of surface to be constructed, which the Embassy of the United States needs. (Embassy comment: This should be 12,000 square feet and may be a typo by Djibouti. We will confirm and clarify. End comment.)

#### Maximum Height of Perimeter Wall:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti authorizes the construction of a solid wall and of a steel fence and raising the wall of the building situated along the perimeter at 6.5 meters above finished grade.

#### Vehicular Access:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti renews its proposal of the access route that was submitted in the plan transmitted 13 June 2005 by letter from the Ministry of Economy and Finance number 490/MEFPP. The Government of the Republic of Djibouti informs the Embassy that the said proposal constitutes the sole and last alternative. If this proposal is not convenient to the Embassy, the Government of the Republic of Djibouti is disposed to grant to the Embassy a new parcel of land on the same site at Haramous.

#### Water Well:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti informs the Embassy that supplying water for the new Embassy will be assured by ONED and regrets not authorizing the Embassy access to the aquifer situated approximately 200 feet below grade.

#### Cultural:

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti confirms that the site does not have cultural importance.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation seizes this occasion to renew to the Embassy of the United States in Djibouti the assurance of its highest consideration.

End text.  
RAGSDALE